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New Jersey Superior Courts Offer Enhanced Public Access Technology

Members of the public seeking information on criminal cases now can access more data, more quickly and more easily, today announced Judge Philip S. Carchman, acting administrative director of the courts. The upgrade enables users to search the Judiciary's criminal case management system, also known as Promis/Gavel, and obtain information about criminal cases that have come before the courts.

The New Jersey Judiciary has installed on the public data terminals in each courthouse new technology that offers improved efficiency in accessing court data using a browser-based "point and click" system. Named "Promis/Gavel Public Access" (PGPA), the new system enables users to search criminal case information by name. Each record contains information such as the criminal charge, the filing date, the status and the disposition of each case. Confidential information is not available through the system.

Promis/Gavel contains court records for criminal cases filed in Superior Court. A name search will yield criminal court records for every case entered under that name. The court records obtained from Promis/Gavel do not constitute a criminal history records check, which must be obtained through law enforcement.

Previously, searching criminal court records from public access terminals was a multi-step process. First, the user had to navigate an electronic report using function keys to search for an individual name. Then, the user requested the case information at a service window and waited for the file to be retrieved. Finally, requests for copies needed to be fulfilled by court staff. Only the criminal case files for the county where the terminal was located could be provided.

Now, users can obtain basic case information themselves, right from the computer, on any criminal case statewide. A standard copy fee is charged for printing pages directly from the PGPA system. A convenient "Help" function allows users to navigate the system and to understand the contents of each file as they appear on the screen.

"Technology has allowed us to open up the courts in a great number of ways," said Judge Carchman. "This latest enhancement further demonstrates our commitment to making the courts accessible to the public."

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